

# fall short in finish



IN THE THICK OF IT: Crow Rory Sloane handballs from a pack while, above, Matt Crouch wraps up Matthew Pavlich.

## Pyke sees positives in fighting performance

REECE HOMFRAY

ADELAIDE'S fighting qualities against Fremantle when it fell two goals behind late in the final term yesterday drew praise from coach Don Pyke.

Despite the two-point loss, Pyke said he saw positives in the Crows' performance including their ball movement which often went direct through the middle of the ground.

The visitors' performance also prompted Fremantle coach Ross Lyon to declare Adelaide the better team, despite what the scoreboard suggested.

"The way we finished the game, it would have been easy when we got to two-and-a-bit goals behind but our guys really fought it out and pushed for the win," Pyke said. "And apart from another point we might have snatched it at the end.

"There were a lot of positives from our viewpoint, some of our ball movement was what we'd been working on and some of the principles of team defence we've been focusing on, we saw some of those.

"And it was a good contest,

it was a good, hard-fought game of footy which we want as an ideal prep for the lead-in to the season."

Defender Brodie Smith was taken off at half-time after feeling ill but Adelaide otherwise made it through the game unscathed. With a 12-day break until its final NAB Challenge game against Gold Coast, Pyke hinted the Crows would go in as near full-strength as possible as an audition for round one against North Melbourne.

Adelaide had its chances yesterday but kicked a wasteful 8.19 which Pyke hopes is not a recurring theme.

"At the moment we'll call it an event, I don't think it was a pattern," he said. "It's really hard to win games of footy when you don't get scoreboard pressure on and I certainly thought in the second quarter we had opportunity and enough flow of the game to score more than we did."

As for using the corridor with ball in hand, Pyke said it was not a strict instruction but rather encouragement to his players to use the middle if it is on.

## 5 THINGS WE LEARNED

**1** IF Fremantle's plan to recruit Harley Bennell means Nat Fyfe can spend more time as a forward then he's going to be even more dangerous than his Brownlow Medal season. He took five marks yesterday and kicked two goals in another ominous warning for rival clubs.

**2** RORY Sloane needs no warming up. Playing his first game of the season the star midfielder got straight to work and had 19 disposals and a goal as he begins life without sidekick Patrick Dangerfield.

**3** PAUL Seedsman is looking like a terrific recruit already. Against Fremantle yesterday he provided constant run along the wing and used the footy with precision with 15 disposals and crucially six inside-50s.

**4** JARRYD Lyons could find a home as a forward. Used regularly as the sub last year and in spurts through the midfield he looked comfortable at the feet of Josh Jenkins yesterday and applied strong forward pressure.

**5** BAD kicking is bad football but coach Don Pyke said yesterday's 8.19 was a one-off "event" rather than a worrying pattern going into the Crows' final NAB Challenge game against Gold Coast on March 11.

- Compiled by REECE HOMFRAY

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